

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION COMMUNITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



CITY OF HOUSTON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Milton Wilson, Jr., Director

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A Community Housing Development Organization or CHDO is a (501)(c) (3) private non-profit entity established with a goal of producing and/or preserving safe, decent, affordable housing for low and moderate income residents. CHDOs are governed by a board of directors having significant representation from low and moderate income residents and/or areas.

Since 1993, the City of Houston's Housing and Community Development Department (HCDD) has certified qualifying organizations as Community Housing Development Organization (CHDOs). Once certified, The CHDOs receive a special package of assistance in that CHDOs are eligible:

- to apply for HOME set-aside funds to finance construction of an affordable housing project(s);
- to apply for funds to cover operating expenses (**a one-time allocation**) while development of a HOME-funded housing project is underway; and
- to secure organizational development and/or technical assistance from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) – Houston Office.

This packet describes the application process, identifies the criteria for securing certification and outlines the required documentation that must accompany the submitted application. In order to secure CHDO certification, the applicant must complete the enclosed forms (**e.g., Application, Board Member Information Sheet etc.**) and submit all required documentation. Failure to do so will delay the application's review and processing. Questions about CHDO certification should be directed to Strategic Planning at 713.868.8440.

Recertification

In addition to "certification," HCDD also has responsibility for "recertification" of CHDOs. The goal of the Recertification Program is to document that the individual agency still satisfies the criteria to be designated a Community Housing Development Organization and to update information about each CHDO and the current project being developed. CHDOs are recertified each time they receive a set-side allocation or CHDO operating periods. When recertification is required, each CHDO is given eight (8) weeks to submit a completed application. If the application is not submitted in a timely manner, the CHDO is decertified. With decertification, the organization is not eligible for any funds and/or services reserved for CHDOs. When a CHDO is "**decertified**," there is a six-month waiting period, which must pass before the organization can reapply for "**certification**." Failure to secure recertification is considered when the agency reapplies for certification.

CHDO CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

1. Applicant/organization has been in existence for at least two (2) years before applying for certification.
2. Organization has obtained Charter, By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation and has been designated a (501) (c) (3) non-profit corporation by the Internal Revenue Service. Certification will not be conferred without designation as a 501 (c) (3). Submission of the application is not sufficient.
3. One-third of the board consists of representatives of the low income Community. Organization demonstrates board representation from throughout community served.
4. Must have successfully completed a housing project (e.g. rehabilitation and/or new construction).
5. Applicant is organized under State and local laws.
- 6. In order to maintain status as a Community Housing Development Organization, the agency must submit an application for affordable housing, within the year of certification. Failure to submit an eligible project will result in decertification as of February 28, 2005.**

See page 7 for checklist of documentation that must accompany application.

CHDO CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1. Organization submits completed Application Packet, with cover letter, to HCDD:

Milton Wilson, Jr., Director
Housing and Community Development Department
City of Houston
601 Sawyer, 4th Floor
Houston, Texas 77007

2. Review of application by HCDD is usually completed within three (3) weeks, **if all “required” information and/or documents are submitted.**
3. Organization is notified verbally or in writing about any deficiencies that exist in the application and is given three (3) weeks to address discrepancy.
4. Approximately four (4) weeks after submittal of the application, the organization is notified in writing as to whether or not the application for CHDO certification has been approved.
5. If the application is not approved, the reasons for disapproval are also outlined in writing.

CHDO CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

Please complete the certification form and attach to other documentation required.

1. Name of Organization _____
2. Address _____
3. City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
4. Phone Number _____ Fax Number _____
5. Name of contact person _____
6. Title _____ Phone Number _____
7. Has your organization previously been certified as a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) by the City of Houston's Housing and Community Development Department (HCDD)? Yes () No ()

If yes, has the name of your organization changed from the previous certification as a CHDO. Please provide the previous name of the organization in space below:

Name: _____

8. Has your organization been "decertified" as a CHDO by City of Houston HCDD?
Yes () No ()

If yes, please explain reason for decertification. _____

9. Please identify affordable housing projects sponsored by the organization.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

10. Identify source(s) of funding for project.

HOME ()

CDBG ()

Other ()

Specify _____

11. On a separate page, provide a brief description of each project citing the location and number of units, identify beneficiaries and the impact on the surrounding community. Include a map displaying locations of project(s).

BOARD MEMBER INFORMATION

As a board member of a designated Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO), please provide the following information:

Name of Organization: _____

NAME: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: HOME (____) _____ BUSINESS (____) _____

OCCUPATION: _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS: _____

PLEASE CHECK ANY OF THE FOLLOWING THAT APPLY TO YOU:

- () I am a resident of a low-income neighborhood. (This does not mean that you must be a low-income person, only that your residence is in a low-income neighborhood.)
- () I am a low-income resident of the community. (Community can mean neighborhood, the city, county, or metropolitan area.)
- () I am an elected representative of a low-income neighborhood organization. (A low-income neighborhood organization is an organization composed primarily of residents of a low-income neighborhood. Examples of such organizations are: block groups, town watch organizations, civic associations, neighborhood church groups, etc.)
- () I am a representative of the public sector. (A public sector representative is any elected public official, any appointed public official, any public/government employee of a public agency or department, or any individual who is appointed by a public official to serve on a CHDO board.)

I certify that the information is correct as of the date indicated below.

Signature

Date

CHDO CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED:

- _____ 1. A copy of organization's Charter.
- _____ 2. A copy of organization's By-Laws. **By-Laws must stipulate that the primary purpose of the organization is the development of affordable housing.**
- _____ 3. A copy of organization's Articles of Incorporation.
- _____ 4. A 501(c)(3) or 501'(C)(4) designation from the IRS. The HOME requirements for a 501(c)(3) designation can be fulfilled by having either a condition or a final 501(c)(3) designation. Submission of documentation that an application for 501(c)(3) status is pending is not suffice to fill this requirement.
- _____ 5. A list comprised of each board member's name, home address, occupation, and place of employment. Information sheet (page 6) must be submitted on each board member. For each, please indicate if the member is a resident of low-income community, a low-income resident of the community, and/or an elected representative of a low-income neighborhood organization. Also, please indicate if the member is a representative of the public sector.
- _____ 6. A notarized statement by your organization's president or chief financial officer or by a certified public accountant that your organization's financial system conforms to the financial accountability standards of 24 CFR 84.21, "Standards for Financial Management Systems."
- _____ 7. Resumes or statements describing the experience of key staff members who have successfully completed projects similar to those to be assisted with HOME funds. Please provide the addresses of the completed projects.
- _____ 8. Documentation that your organization has **experience in developing affordable housing.** Please include the address of the affordable housing project.
- _____ 9. A map defining the geographic boundaries of the service area.